

Dead Poets Society





Main Facts

Year Made: 1989

Production Company: [Touchstone Pictures](#), [Silver Screen Partners IV](#), [A Steven Haft Production](#)

Directed by: Peter Weir

Written by: Tom Schulman

Genre: Comedy, Drama



Main Actors

1. Robin Williams
2. Robert Sean Leonard
3. Ethan Hawke



Major Plot Summary

Painfully shy Todd Anderson has been sent to the school where his popular older brother was valedictorian. His roommate, Neil Perry, although exceedingly bright and popular, is very much under the thumb of his overbearing father. The two, along with their other friends, meet Professor Keating, their new English teacher, who tells them of the Dead Poets Society, and encourages them to go against the status quo. Each does so in his own way, and is changed for life.



Financial Information

Budget: \$16,400,000

Money Made: Gross USA: \$95,860,000

Cumulative World Wide: \$140,000,000

Special Costs: N/A



Major Quotes

Todd Anderson: [*standing on his desk*] Oh captain, my captain.

McAllister: "Show me the heart unfettered by foolish dreams and I'll show you a happy man."

John Keating: "But only in their dreams can men be truly free. 'Twas always thus, and always thus will be."

McAllister: Tennyson?

John Keating: No, Keating.

John Keating: There's a time for daring and there's a time for caution, and a wise man understands which is called for.

John Keating: No matter what anybody tells you, words and ideas can change the world.

John Keating: Boys, you must strive to find your own voice. Because the longer you wait to begin, the less likely you are to find it at all. Thoreau said, "Most men lead lives of quiet desperation." Don't be



Historical Significance

Helped elevate the level of major discussions like suicide.

Major dramatic role for Robin Williams



Filming Information

Filming Location: [Everett Theatre - 47 West Main Street, Middletown, Delaware, USA](#) [New Castle, Delaware, USA](#)

Special advance made in film: N/A

Source Material: Original story based on real events



Composition/Music

The Battle of New Orleans

Written by [Jimmie Driftwood](#)



Inane Trivia

To help his young leads bond, director [Peter Weir](#) had them all room together.

What attracted [Robin Williams](#) to the role of John Keating more than anything else was that John Keating was the type of teacher he, in his school days, always wished he had.

Upon the death of [Robin Williams](#) in 2014, the famous line "O Captain! My Captain!" was used by many media outlets in his obituaries.

Director [Peter Weir](#) chose to shoot the film in chronological order to better capture the development of the relationships between the boys and their growing respect for Mr. Keating.

The scene where Todd cries outside in the snow was done in one take. It was originally an interior scene, but when it started to snow, [Peter Weir](#) thought the scene might have more impact if it were done outside. The snow was already beginning to let up so it had to be done in one take. Fortunately, [Ethan Hawke](#) managed it.

[Liam Neeson](#) had originally landed the leading role to be directed by [Jeff Kanew](#), but lost it to [Robin](#)



Accolades/Recognition

Winner

Oscar

Best Writing, Screenplay Written Directly for the Screen

[Tom Schulman](#)

Winner

BAFTA Film Award

Best Film

[Steven Haft](#)

[Paul Junger Witt](#)

[Tony Thomas](#)

[Peter Weir](#)

Best Original Film Score

[Maurice Jarre](#)